

REMARKS

By this reply, claims 8 and 15 have been cancelled; claims 1 and 9 have been amended; and new claims 16-18 have been added, leaving claims 1-6, 9-14 and 16-18 pending in this application. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Personal Interview

Applicants thank Examiner Simone for the courtesies extended to their undersigned representative during the personal interview conducted on August 29, 2006. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is contained in the following remarks.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,168,141 to Zimmer ("Zimmer"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 9 has been amended to include the features of cancelled claim 15. Claim 9, as amended, recites that the infuser includes, *inter alia*, two steam inlets which are diametrically placed and radially disposed such that steam enters into the upper region of the pressure vessel through a concentric distribution chamber (emphasis added). As was discussed during the personal interview, Zimmer's apparatus does not include two steam inlets which are diametrically placed and radially disposed. For at least this reason, claim 9 is patentable over Zimmer. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-6 and 10-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Zimmer. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites an apparatus in an infuser for a liquid food product. The infuser includes, *inter alia*, two steam inlets which are diametrically placed and radially disposed such that steam enters into the upper region of the pressure vessel through a concentric distribution chamber (emphasis added). Applicants submit that Zimmer also does not disclose or suggest the apparatus recited in claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over Zimmer. Claims 2-6, which depend from claim 1, are also patentable over Zimmer for at least the same reasons as those for which claim 1 is patentable.

Applicants submit that Zimmer also does not suggest the apparatus recited in claim 9. Claims 10-14, which depend from claim 9, are also patentable over Zimmer for at least the same reasons as those for which claim 9 is patentable. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

New Claims

Independent claim 16 recites an apparatus in an infuser for a liquid food product. The infuser comprises, *inter alia*, a pressure vessel, a concentric distribution chamber defined by a wall of the pressure vessel, a guide plate and at least one foraminated plate, the guide plate having a lower end, and the pressure vessel having a constant inner diameter from the lower end of the guide plate to a location above the lower end (emphasis added). Support for the apparatus recited in claim 16 is provided in Figure 2, for example, which show a guide plate 11 having a

lower end, and the pressure vessel 1 having a constant inner diameter from the lower end of the guide plate 11 to above the lower end.

As was discussed during the personal interview, Zimmer's partition wall 30 defines a product treatment chamber 31, including the inner diameter of the chamber 31. The partition wall 30 has a lower end. However, the inner diameter of the chamber 30 defined by the partition wall increases from the lower end of the partition wall 30 to above the lower end. Applicants submit that claim 16 is also patentable.

Claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 16. Support for claims 17 and 18 is provided at page 6, first paragraph, of the specification. Claims 17 and 18 are also patentable.


Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, allowance of the application is respectfully requested. If there are any questions concerning this response, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: September 5, 2006

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